

THE DESOTO COUNTY NEWS

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ON FORM OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

If advocates of government ownership are so desirous that the public possess and control public utilities, why not take up the first opportunity at hand.

Build good highways.

That is a form of ownership easily achieved if the public desires.

Every community can have this form of government ownership.

Useful to the masses and beneficial to the country, it is yet the most simple form of public control.

At the same time it is a matter most neglected, thereby affording industrial injury beyond estimation.

It may be said that the highways are already public property.

True, but the public should improve and increase them before seeking other fields of endeavor.

The public should first demonstrate its ability to care for what it has before attempting to acquire other utilities.

AN EXECUTIVE VIOLATION.

Governor Napoleon B. Broward has appointed a woman for clerk of the court for Dade county and she has been duly commissioned and entered upon the discharge of the duties of her office.

This brings up all sorts of questions.

If a woman can hold the office of clerk of the court by appointment she can, of course, hold the office by an election by the people and this, as we have before said, opens up a vast field for possibilities and speculation.

There is no question but that a woman can discharge the duties of this office just as well as a man; we mean that some women can perform the duties just as well as some men, for the work is mostly clerical and it goes for the saying that a great many women are clerically competent to hold down most any position.

And then, too, if a pretty, attractive, competent woman stands for this office the average man will be too gallant to oppose her and the office will be hers for the asking.

Then, too, if a woman can legally hold the office of clerk of the circuit court why is she not legally competent to hold any other elective office? Say, for instance, judge of the county court, tax assessor, tax collector, or even high sheriff of a county?

A woman can nicely perform all the duties of these offices except perhaps the duties of sheriff, and she can procure a deputy to perform the duties of this office, such, for instance, as pulling the death trap and hurling the condemned prisoners into eternity.

The next election will open up a wide field for speculation.

If several pretty, fascinating and attractive young women consent to enter the race for the various county offices the campaign will at least be unique and picturesque.

We don't know just what we shall see in the next campaign.—Ocala Banner.

The plain fact of the case is

that the governor possessed no right to make such appointment, and in so doing he violated the oath he took when assuming executive duties.

Both the letter and the spirit of the constitution of the State of Florida forbid the holding of elective office by any except a male citizen.

It follows, therefore, that every act of the appointee during her incumbency of the office is illegal, and while sentiment and pity for the widow will absolve her from all blame or legal entanglement, yet the record of illegality remains.

The question of the lady's fitness or her ability to conduct the office is entirely foreign to discussion.

Legal qualifications alone are to be considered.

Kindly sentiment is an indispensable factor of society, but it has no place in governmental affairs.

The governor's desire to aid may be pardoned. It is a weakness creditable to any gentleman, but his disregard of the constitution should be rebuked.

We would like to learn, however, how many of those who have commended this appointment stand ready to endorse the suggestion that women be allowed to vote in this State and be permitted equal rights with men in the seeking of office?

At any time such innovation is considered we are ready to give our aid in its behalf.

President McCurdy declared that "life insurance protects the family." True, it protected the McCurdy family to a fullness of earthly riches.

"It makes Billie Hearst mad to find that he didn't get the goods for his money," says the Appalachicola Times. But in his efforts to pose as a political martyr he can look upon the money as well spent for national advertising of himself.

The suggestion that Dr. Crill, of Palatka, seek the nomination for governor has met with cordial endorsement from many of the State papers, a token of esteem which could be enjoyed by but few men who have been so active in public life as he.

"General Gilechrist, DeSoto's popular representative in the legislature, entertained a number of editors and legislators at luncheon at the Tampa Bay Hotel Wednesday. Speaking from the press standpoint we can safely say that the courtesy was highly appreciated."

—Zolfo Advertiser. The editor of the esteemed Advertiser, however, should speak for himself only, and not attempt to offer response for the press, as doubtless those newspaper men who were favored with invitations to the select luncheon will be able to individually note their appreciation.

Several papers of the State are urging that care be exercised in selecting members of the next legislature, special stress being laid on the need of men possessing purity and integrity. As to that nothing may be said. At every election men, corrupt in every sense, are entrusted with the duties of legislation, yet they are exalted both by press and public as the "finest, etc." At least one point should be noted: Choose men of sufficient intelligence to enact laws which will stand the test of constitutionality, and who will pass measures that will not be repealed by the next succeeding legislature.

"Governor Broward's Everglades drainage scheme won him many votes in his canvass last year, but since the people have had time to study the question more closely a strong sentiment is forming against carrying it into effect and it is understood that land owners who are to be taxed to carry on the work will resort to the courts to stop the collection of taxes levied for that purpose," says the Brad-

entown Journal. It would seem that the owners have excellent reasons for such action, as the law will force them to the alleged improvement of their property without their consent; moreover, the tax is mandatory, fixing an arbitrary rate upon all lands irrespective of their values, differing therein from the principle of equity upon which all taxation should be based.

The Jacksonville Sun shed its rays over Florida on Saturday, and really the first issue was a notable beginning and forecast of excellence in the weekly journal which Messrs. L'Engle and Taylor will publish. It contained many interesting articles, prominent among which was a recital of facts that lead to the suspension of the daily Sun. Indeed, the view may be taken that the publishers of the Sun are public benefactors, for is it not a benefaction to the people when the mask of hypocrisy is stripped from those who pose as moralists, while beneath their veneer of pretense and piety is the active spirit of the highwayman who uses pen instead of bludgeon to intimidate his victims?

Waiting For an Eclipse.

Lewis Swift, the astronomer, told how he waited in Denver for the eclipse of 1878. For a hundred years astronomers had expected this eclipse, and three minutes before the computed time for it to begin Mr. Swift seated himself at his telescope and looked into a cloudless sky. "It was a solemn moment," said he. "No words can describe it. Slowly, as if time's ceaseless flow had begun to slacken, two of the three minutes had passed away, and no eclipse and nothing to indicate that anything unusual would happen. I then began to count the tick, tick, tick of our sidereal clock till all the seconds had passed away, and no eclipse, but before the next tick I saw three black mountain peaks on the moon's limb glide on the sun. The eclipse had begun just three-quarters of a second too late." It is such things as this that make one respect the accuracy of the computations of the astronomers when they tell us about the distances in the heavens, the weight and size of planets and other kindred things.

Relieving the Brain.

The persistent use of the muscular system is well calculated to relieve the brain and nervous system of their tension, says Dr. H. J. Hall in Good Housekeeping. It is also true that manual work pleases and satisfies the mind when its results are good. All this becomes clearer when we realize how vainly we may seek relief from nervous fatigue in physical rest or even in recreations of the ordinary sort. The quiet room or the quiet hillside, so suggestive of rest and peace—these are too often impotent in the presence of carking care. One reason for this failure is that the brain and the body are commonly not tired in what is called nervous exhaustion, but are only irritated, while the sense of fatigue, which is so misleading, is merely the result of that irritation and may be termed a psychic fatigue. Under these circumstances it is easy to understand that it is change, not necessarily physical rest, which is so sorely needed.

Nailing the Ghost.

An extraordinary instance of rustic superstition has been brought to light in a Hungarian village. Owing to sinister rumors as to the cause of death the authorities had the body of a peasant exhumed and were horrified to find the hands and feet nailed down to the coffin, while a long nail had also been driven through the heart. An inquiry was at once held, with the result that an old woman confessed that the act had been perpetrated under her directions. The man had died a sudden death, and, there being a superstition in Hungary that persons dying under such circumstances haunt the house in which they die, the further superstition has grown up that postmortem reappearances can be prevented by nailing the body in its coffin. The old woman further admitted having done the same thing in all similar cases for many years.—London Globe.

Dueling Pistols.

The pistol used in the duel is not the military arm or the revolver, but a very carefully made and wonderfully accurate weapon known as the dueling pistol. For many years the length of this arm was a matter of grave discussion at all the clubs in England and on the continent. At first the dueling pistol had a twelve inch barrel and carried twenty round bullets to the point, but in 1810 the elder Devisure, with his confrere, Lepage, at Paris, and Manton and Egg of London, the most eminent pistol makers of their respective countries, fixed the actual length of the dueling pistol barrel at nine inches, and there it has remained. A case of the best pistols used to bring from 500 to 750 francs, or \$100 to \$150.

Selling Soap Bubbles.

"Foreigners are constantly surprised at the Japanese schemes for earning a little money," writes a traveler in Japan. "In Choshi I saw the queerest yet. A man with a bucket and a bundle of bamboo tubes was going up and down the street selling soap bubbles. He carried soapy water, of which he sold a small portion for one-twentieth or one-tenth of a cent. He left behind him groups of happy children, who filled the air with beautifully colored bubbles blown from tiny tubes."

Calomel. Calomel was discovered by Crolius in the seventeenth century, and the first directions for its preparation were given by Beguin in 1608. Its name is derived from two Greek words, signifying "a beautiful black," because in its preparation a black powder is the first step in the manufacture, being produced by rubbing mercury together with corrosive sublimate.

Jumping For the Train.

Criticism—Is it really only ten minutes' walk to the station from your house? Subbubs—What a ridiculous question! Nobody in our lovely suburb ever walks to the station. I believe, however, that it's ten minutes' walk from the station.—Philadelphia Press.

Jumping at Conclusions.

"You're as bad as a playful kitten in jumping at conclusions," remarked a youth to his friend. "Do kittens jump at conclusions?" asked the guilty one. "Certainly; have you never seen kittens chase their tails?"

Look For the Good.

If we will take the good we find, asking no questions, we shall have happy measures. The great gifts are not got by analysis. Everything is good on the highway.—Emerson.

John Adams was the originator of our national motto—"E Pluribus Unum."

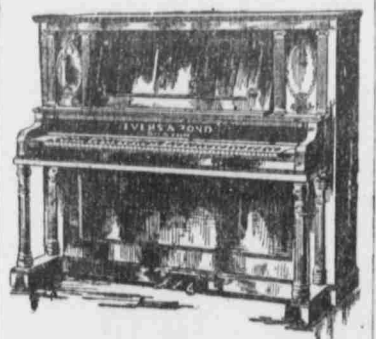
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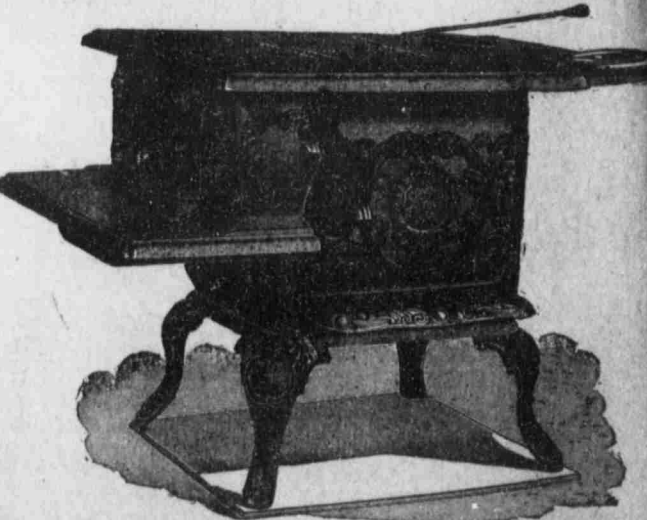
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